

November 21, 2005

Dear Friend:

There are indications that House and Senate negotiators have come to an agreement on the U.S.A. PATRIOT Act Reauthorization, and that the conference report may be voted on by the House in December. I had hoped that during the conference committee, Senate provisions granting more congressional oversight and constitutional protections would have been kept in this bill. Although I have not seen the final language, it appears that the conference report fails to truly reform the PATRIOT Act to protect our civil liberties.

Unfortunately, it reportedly retains and extends the most controversial provisions in the PATRIOT Act, including the section granting law enforcement authorities unprecedented powers to search, or order the search of, library and bookstore records without probable cause or the need for search warrants. The bill also makes permanent 14 provisions of the PATRIOT Act that were set to expire this year.

Unless the conference report that we see on the floor of the House differs significantly from what reports are saying is included, it will be difficult to support the PATRIOT Act reauthorization. There certainly are sections for the original Act that I support, important provisions to assist law enforcement that will be reauthorized. I believe this can be done without eroding our civil liberties, however. I pledge to continue working after reauthorization to improve the most damaging provisions of the Act. To learn more about recent developments on the PATRIOT Act Reauthorization Conference Report, please visit...

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. I hope you have found the information useful. Please watch your inbox for future updates.

Very Truly Yours,

Tom Udall
Member of Congress